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cent. since 1891. Its industrial character is shown by the fact that two-thirds of the population were born elsewhere, and that females number only 507 to 1,000 males. In other words, the many immigrants mostly leave their women at home. Plague and its consequences explain the reduction of Bombay City by 6 per cent. to a total of 776,006, of whom only one-quarter were born there. In Madras, which is less important industrially, fewer than one-third of the population of 509,346 came from the outside. Among towns of under 100,000 that exhibit noteworthy growth are Peshawur, Jabalpur, Dacca, Multan, Sholápur, Haidarábád (Sind), Hubli, and Coconada.

The gross increase in the total population, allowing for new areas and better enumeration, was only 1.5 per cent.—a gain of 3.9 per cent. in British provinces being set off by a decline of 6.6 in native States. Burma and Assam have made great progress, but famine and plague caused a notable falling off in Bombay and the central provinces. Other provinces have also suffered considerably from the scarcities and the epidemics of disease that have left so black a mark on the decade. Plague alone probably claimed a million victims. Mortality from famine would have been greater but for the irrigation canals, which increased in mileage from 9,000 to 43,000 in the ten years, and now secure 30,000,000 acres from drought.

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## FETISH—ITS RELATION TO THE FAMILY.

BY

R. H. NASSAU, M.D., D.D.

In most tribes of the Bantu the unit in the constitution of the community is the Family, not the individual. However successful a man may be in trade, hunting, or any other means of gaining wealth, he cannot, even if he would, keep it all to himself. He must share with the Family, whose indolent members thus are supported by the more energetic or industrious. I often urged my civilized employees not to spend their wages immediately, almost on pay-day itself, in the purchase of things they really did not need. I represented that they should lay by "for a rainy day." But they said that if it was known that they had money laid up their relatives would give them no peace till they had almost compelled them to draw it and divide it with them. They all yielded to this,

the strong, the intelligent, the diligent—submitting to their Family, though they knew that their hard-earned pay was going to support weakness and heathenism and thriftlessness.

Not only financial rights, but all other individual rights and responsibilities, were absorbed by the superior right and duty of the Family. If an individual committed theft, murder, or any other crime, the offended party would, if convenient, lay hold of him for punishment. But only if it was convenient; to this plaintiff justice in the case was fully satisfied if any member of the offender's Family could be caught or killed. Or, if the offence was great, even any member of the offender's tribe.

Families recognized as proper and submitted to this custom; for Family was expected to stand by and assist and defend all its members, whether right or wrong. Each member knew that, and relied upon it, as escape from personal punishment or for help in his individual weakness or inability.

In getting a wife, for instance, no young man has saved up enough to buy one. His wages or other gains, year after year, beyond what he had squandered on himself, had been squandered on members of his Family. The Family, therefore, all contributed to the purchase of the wife. Though he henceforth owned her as his wife, the Family had claims on her for various services and work which neither he nor she could refuse.

If, in the course of time, he had accumulated other women, as a polygamist, and, subsequently becoming a Christian, was required to put away all but one (according to missionary rule), it was difficult for him to do so—not because of any special affection for the women involved in the dismissal, nor for pity of any hardship that might come to the women themselves. True, they would be a pecuniary loss to him; but his Christianity, if sincere, could accept that. And the dismissal of the extra women does not, in Africa, impose on them special shame, nor any hardship for self-support, as in some other countries. The real trouble would be that they are not his to dismiss unqualifiedly. The Family had a pecuniary claim on them; and the heathen members thereof are not willing to let them go free back to their people. If this man puts them away, he must give them to some man or men within the family pale, who probably already are polygamists. The property must be kept in the family inheritance. Thus, though attempting to escape from polygamy himself, this man would be a consenting party in fastening it on others. His offense before the Church, therefore, would still be the same.

For such concentrated interests as are represented in the Family there naturally would be fetishes to guard those interests, separate from the individual fetish with its purely personal importance. Respect for the Family fetish is cognate to the worship of the spirits of ancestors. Among the Barotse of South Africa, for this worship, "they have altars, in their huts, made of branches, on which they place human bones, but they have no images, pictures or idols."

#### Among the Mpongwe tribes of Western Equatorial Africa

The profound respect for aged persons, by a very natural operation of the mind, is turned into idolatrous regard for them when dead. It is not supposed that they are divested of their power and influence by death; but, on the contrary, they are raised to a higher and more powerful sphere of influence, and hence the natural disposition of the living, and especially those related to them in any way in this world, to look to them, and call upon them for aid in all the emergencies and trials of life. It is no uncommon thing to see large groups of men and women, in times of peril or distress, assembled along the brow of some commanding eminence, or along the skirts of some dense forest, calling in the most piteous and touching tones upon the spirits of their ancestors.

Images are used in the worship of ancestors, but they are seldom exposed to public view. They are kept in some secret corner, and the man who has them in charge, especially if they are intended to represent a father or predecessor in office, takes food and drink to them and a very small portion of almost anything that is gained in trade.

But a yet more prominent feature of this ancestral worship is to be found in the preservation and adoration of the bones of the dead, which may be fairly regarded as a species of *relic* worship. The skulls of distinguished persons are preserved with the utmost care, but always kept out of sight. I have known the head of a distinguished man to be dissevered from the body when it was but partly decomposed and suspended so as to drip upon a mass of chalk provided for the purpose. The brain is supposed to be the seat of wisdom, and the chalk absorbs this by being placed under the head during the process of decomposition. By applying this to the foreheads of the living it is supposed they will imbibe the wisdom of the person whose brain has dripped upon the chalk.—(J. L. WILSON, "*Western Africa*," p. 393.)

In the Benga tribe, just north of the Equator, in West Africa, this Family fetish is known by the name of *Yâkâ*. It is a bundle of parts of the bodies of their dead. From time to time, as their relatives die, the first joints of their fingers and toes, especially including their nails, a small clipping from a lobe of the ear, and perhaps snippings of hair are added to it. But the chief constituents are the finger-ends. Nothing is taken from any internal organ of the body, as in the composition of other fetishes. The value of the *Yâkâ* seems to lie in a combination of whatever powers were possessed during their life by the dead, portions of whose bodies are contained in it. But even these are of use apparently only as an actual "medicine," the efficiency of the medicine depending on

the spirits of the Family dead being associated with those portions of their bodies. This efficiency is called into action by prayer and by the incantations of the doctor.

Around that doctor and his power is always a cloak of mystery, which I have not been able to solve entirely, and of which the natives themselves do not seem to have a clear understanding. The other factors in their fetish worship have to them a degree of clearness sufficient to make them able to give an intelligible explanation. It is plain, for instance, that the component parts of any fetish are looked upon by them as we look upon the drugs of our *Materia Medica*. It is plain, also, that these "drugs" are operative, not as ours by certain inherent chemical qualities, but by the presence of a spirit, to whom they are favourite media. And it is also clear that this spirit is induced to act by the pleasing enchantments of the magic doctor. But beyond this, what? Whence does the doctor get his influence? What is there in his prayer or incantation greater than the prayer, or drum, or song, or magic mirror of any other person? For, acknowledgedly, himself is subject to the spirits, and may be thwarted by some other more powerful spirit which, for the time being, is operated by some other doctor; or himself may be killed by the very spirit he is manipulating if he should incur its displeasure.

Belief in the necessity of having the doctor is implicit, the while that the explanation of his *modus operandi* is vague. And he is feared lest he employ his utilized spirit for revenge or other harmful purpose. A patient and his relatives who call in the services of any doctor are therefore careful to obey him, and avoid offending him in any way.

The Yâkâ is appealed to in Family emergencies. Suppose, for instance, that some one member has secretly done something wrong—*e. g.*, alone in the forest he has met and killed a member of another Family, or he has devastated a neighbour's plantation, or any other crime, and he is unknown to the community as the offender. But the powerful Yâkâ of the injured Family has brought disease, or death, or some other affliction on the offender's Family. They are dying or otherwise suffering, and they do not know the reason why. After the failure of ordinary medicine or personal fetishes to relieve, or heal, or prevent the continuance of the evil, the hidden Yâkâ is brought out by the chiefs of the offender's Family. A doctor is called in consultation; the Yâkâ is to be opened and its ancestral relic contents appealed to. At this point the fears of the offender overcome him and he privately calls aside

the doctor and the older members of the clan. He takes them to a quiet spot in the forest and confesses what he has done; taking them to the garden he had devastated, or to the spot where he had hidden the remains of the person he had killed. If this confession were made to the public, so that the injured Family became aware of it, his own life would be at stake; but, making it to his Yâkâ, and to only the doctor and chosen representatives of his Family, they are bound to keep his secret—the doctor on professional grounds and his relatives on the grounds of Family solidarity. The problem then is for the doctor to make what seems like an expiation. The explanation of this, as made to me, is vague. Whether the Yâkâ of the injured Family is to be appeased? Whether the offender's own Yâkâ is to be aroused from dormant inaction to efficient protection? Or both?

The Yâkâ bundle is solemnly opened by the doctor in the presence of the Family, a little of the dust of its foul contents is rubbed in the foreheads of the members present, a goat or sheep is killed and its blood sprinkled on them, the while they are audibly praying to the combined ancestor-power in the Yâkâ. These prayers are continued all the while the doctor is acting, who makes his incantations long and varied. The sanctifying redwood powder-ointment is rubbed over their bodies; and the Yâkâ-Spirit, having eaten the life-essence of the sacrificed animal, its flesh is eaten by the doctor and the Family. And some more nail-parings are added to the Yâkâ bundle. It is tied up again, and again is hidden away in one of their huts, care being taken to add to it from the body of their member who next dies. The curse that had fallen on them is supposed to be wiped out, and the affliction under which they were lying is believed to be removed.

Recently (1901) a Mpongwe man had gone as a trader into the Batanga interior. He was sick at the time of his going, one of his legs being swollen with an edematous affection, so much so that people in the interior, natives of that part of the country and fellow-traders, wondered that he should travel so far from his home in that condition. He said he was seeking, among different tribes, for the cure he had failed to obtain in his own tribe. Later on he died. He happened to die alone; while others who lived with him, one of them a relative, were temporarily out of the house. The suddenness of the death aroused the superstitious beliefs of that relative, and he rushed to the conclusion that it had occurred by Black Art machinations of some enemy. But of the whereabouts or the personality of that enemy he had not even a suspicion. He

cut from the dead man's body the first joints of his fingers and all the toe-nails, put them in the hollow of a horn, and closed its opening, intending to add its contents to his family Yâkâ when he should return to Gaboon. Then he waved the horn to and fro towards the spirits of the air, held it above his head, and struck it on the back of his own neck, uttering at the same time an imprecation that as had died his relative so might die that very day even as he had died the unknown enemy who had caused his death.

There is another Family "medicine," still used in some tribes, that was formerly held in reverence by the Banâkâ and Bapuku tribes of the Batanga country of the German Kamerun Colony. It was called Malanda. Some adult man having died and been buried, there were grounds for believing, under some superstitious fear, that witchcraft was being or would be exercised against the survivors. The grounds for this expectation of evil might be something apparently abnormal in the cause or manner of the death, or some untoward and inauspicious events immediately following the death. Whatever might be any one of the many possible grounds for such a fear, the chief men, six or eight as the case might be, of the Family involved would privately resolve to have Malanda made for all its members. Calling the able-bodied male members together, they would spend about two weeks in building a house, in the jungle adjoining the village, of a size large enough to contain from twenty to fifty persons, according to the number of their lads and young men. This shed would be without doors or windows, one gable being left entirely open. The young people who assisted in building it were not allowed to know the object of it. When completed, secretly, at night, their chief men would dig up the now rotting corpse and carry it to the shed.

During the erection of the shed other men had been employed in carving an image of a male figure. Cavities were gouged in the sockets of the eyes; two teeth were extracted from the corpse, and they were embedded with resin in those cavities and hidden by a small piece of glass stuck also with resin where the eyeball should be. [Glass has been imported into Africa for hundreds of years in small mirrors, tumblers, and other glassware.] The image was set up in the shed, standing on a large basket made of a bark resembling birch. Immediately on the disinterring of the corpse the head was cut off, and the brains (a most valuable "medicine") were mixed with chalk, the powdered bark or wood of the red-wood tree, and the ashes of other plants. The headless corpse was

tied up in a standing position against one of the walls, being held in place by cross pieces of wood.

In the morning the elders announced to the Family, "Malanda has come!" this word being applied to either the disinterred corpse itself, or the "medicine" to be made from it, or the ceremonies about to be performed with it.

Men then went into the forest, cut down any large tree, and carried its trunk into the village when the sun was well risen, about the altitude of 8 A.M. Then the young men and lads were summoned, and were ordered to sit on the log motionless, their heads thrown far back and their open eyes, to gaze at the sun. In this painful position they were to keep their eyes, fixed on the sun as it continued to rise toward the zenith, and to keep up their stare at its blinding light and heat, still motionless and speechless. When exhausted, or actually fainting, they fell back off the log; they were seized and blindfolded and carried or made to walk to the shed. (Previous to this they had not been allowed to see what was in the shed, nor did they know what was there.) Arrived at the shed, still blindfolded, they were severely beaten by the old men.

And then the bandage was suddenly removed from their eyes, and there were revealed to their sight the image with its staring glass eyes and the rotting headless corpse standing with its extended arms. If, terrified at this horrid exhibition, they attempted to flee, they were seized and again severely beaten.

All being finally reduced to abject submission, they were then questioned, each one in turn, whether they had witchcraft in them ("O na Jemba!"). Some denied; others actually admitted that they had. If the denial was satisfactory, some of the brain mixture was rubbed longitudinally on their breasts; if they admitted, the "medicine" was rubbed across their breasts horizontally. A pit and tunnel were dug in the foot of the shed, where the corpse was put by the priest-doctor and others. Later this corpse was brought back and cut in half longitudinally. These two pieces were laid on the floor parallel to each other and a few feet apart. The young people were taken in two companies to the two sides of the shed opposite to the remains, and were made to advance toward each other, stepping over the remains, and then standing together in the centre space, were taught a terrible oath of secrecy (a tradition of the ancient Covenant Oath over a divided heifer?). The remains were then disarticulated, and the bones (most of the decomposed flesh having fallen away from them) were put into the bark baskets; its cover was closed down, and the image placed on top of it. This



entire process, with all its attendant incantations—anointing of the bodies of the youth, the imparting of instructions, and directions of what to do or not to do, with jugglery of the doctor—would take as many as twenty days. Those young people all that time were kept prisoners in that shed, eating and sleeping in proximity to the corpse of their relative. No females were allowed to enter the shed or witness any of the ceremonies there performed.

Then the entire company adjourned to the street of the village, carrying with them the basket and its foul contents, and the image. Around this, in the street, they danced, and sang, and prayed, during which exercises some man would parade before them, bending low toward the basket and its image, and then suddenly erecting himself, and stepping high as he walked, to the time of the drum, and heavily aspirating as he brought down each foot "Hah! hah!" These ceremonies and rites all completed, the basket and image were placed in a dark room in the house of their chief man, who often set before it sacrifice of a plate of food, or tied to the body of the image pieces of cloth or other offerings. The image, with its glass eyes, by virtue of the hidden teeth, and the bones over which it was standing, could see the approach of evil-minded persons coming against any member of the Family, and would seize and kill them or drive them away.

Another "medicine" similar to the Yâkâ in its Family interest is called by the Balimba people living north of Batanga, Ekoñi. The following statement is made to me by intelligent Batanga people who know the parties and who believe that what they report actually occurred. A certain man named Elesa procured a small but powerful bundle of the Ekoñi "medicine." His brother-in-law one day asked for the loan of it, that he might use it for purposes of his own.

Elesa refused, telling him that as they belonged to different families he would not know how to manage it, and could accomplish nothing with it. And Elesa went off hunting in the forest. During his absence the brother-in-law foolishly determined to possess himself of the Ekoñi. Trying several keys in a chest in Elesa's house where he supposed the "medicine" was hidden, one fitted and turned the key. The lid of the chest flew open, and out jumped the Ekoñi, followed by the contents of the chest—cloth, hats, coats, and a variety of other goods. He was delighted, and was about to stoop and gather up the goods and run away with them. To his astonishment, he found he could not move. He was held by an invisible force. Elesa, off in the forest, was enabled

by the Ekoñi to see all this, and he hastened back to his house, and saw his brother-in-law standing, rooted to the spot. He took a chair quietly from the room, and, sitting in the doorway, said, "Now, brother-in-law, you have seen my Ekoñi; I will not release you from that spot till you give up your wife and all you ever paid for her." The brother-in-law offered his father instead of his wife. But Elesa refused. The father also possessed an Ekoñi, which enabled him to see and hear what was going on. Seizing his spear, he hastened to the house and rebuked Elesa for his hard terms, and offered instead one thousand German marks (\$250). These were accepted. Elesa picked up his Ekoñi and put it back in the chest, followed by the goods that had been scattered on the floor. And instantly the brother-in-law felt his legs free to move. This was gravely told me by my cook, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and was endorsed by a woman of my own Church who was present during the recital.

My friend the late Miss Mary H. Kingsley, on page 273 of her "Travels in West Africa," mentions an incident which shows that she had discovered one of these Yâkâ bundles (though, apparently, she did not know of it as such, and suspected it to be a relic of cannibalism. It is true, however, that she did come in contact with cannibalism.) She had been given lodging in a room of a house in a Fang village, in the country lying between the Azyingo branch of the Ogowe River and the Rëmbwe branch of the Gaboon River. On retiring at night she had observed some small bags suspended from the wall.

Waking up again, I noticed the smell in the hut was violent, from being shut up, I suppose, and it had an unmistakably organic origin. Knocking the end off the smouldering bush-light that lay burning on the floor, I investigated, and tracked it to those bags; so I took down the biggest one, and carefully noted exactly how the tie-tie (rattan rope) had been put around its mouth; for these things are important, and often mean a lot. I then shook its contents out in my hat, for fear of losing anything of value. They were a human hand, three big toes, four eyes, two ears, and other portions of the human frame. The hand was fresh, the others only so-so, and shrivelled. Replacing them, I tied the bag up, and hung it up again.

It was well she noticed a peculiarity in the tying of the calamus-palm string or "tie-tie." A stranger would not have been put in that room of whose honesty or honour there was doubt. White visitors are implicitly trusted that they will neither steal nor desecrate.

Another Family-medicine in the Batanga region is known by the name of Mbatî. An account of the mode of its use was given me by a Batanga man as occurring in his own lifetime with his own father. The father was a heathen and a polygamist, having several wives,

by each of whom he had children. One day he went hunting in the forest. He observed a dark object crouching among the cassava bushes on the edge of a plantation. Assuming that it was a wild beast wasting the cassava plants, he fired, and was frightened by a woman's outcry, "Oh! I am killed!" She was his own niece, who had been stooping down, hidden among the bushes as she was weeding the garden. He helped her to their village, where she died. She made no accusation. The blood shed being in their own family, no restitution was required nor any investigation made. And the matter would have passed without further comment had not, within a year, a number of his young children died in succession; and it began to be whispered that perhaps the murdered woman's spirit was revenging itself, or perhaps some other family was using witchcraft against them. A general council of adjacent families was called. After discussion it was agreed that the other families were without blame; that the trouble rested with my informant's father's own family, which should settle the difficulty as they saw best, by inflicting on the father some punishment or by propitiation being made by the entire family. The latter was decided on by the doctors. They gathered from the forest a quantity of barks of trees, leaves of parasitic ferns, which were boiled in a very large kettle along with human excrement and a certain rare variety of plantain, as small as the smallest variety of banana. To each member of the family present, old and young, male and female, were given two of these unripe plantains. The rind does not readily peel off from unripe plantains and bananas; a knife is generally used. But for this "medicine" the rinds were to be picked off only by the finger-nails of those handling them, and then were to be shredded into the kettle in small pieces, also only by their finger-nails. A goat or sheep was killed, and its blood also mixed in. This mass was thoroughly boiled. Then the doctor took a short bush having many small branches (a tradition of hyssop?), and, dipping it into the decoction, he frequently and thoroughly sprinkled all the members of the family, saying, "Let the displeasure of the Spirit for the death of that woman, or any other guilt of any hidden or unknown crime, be removed!" The liquid portion of the contents of the kettle having been used up in the propitiatory sprinkling, the more solid pottage-like débris were then eaten by all members of the family as a preventive of possible danger. And the rite was closed with the usual drum, dance, and song. My informant told me that at that time, and taking part in the ceremonies, was his own mother, who was then pregnant with

him. The Mbatì "medicine" seems to have been considered efficient, for he, the seventh child, survived; and subsequently three others were born. The previous six had all died.

Though two of those three have since died, in some way they were considered to have died by Njambi (Providence)—*i. e.*, a natural death. For it is not unqualifiedly true that all tribes of Africa regard all deaths as caused by Black Art. There are some deaths that are admitted to be by call of God, and for these there is no witchcraft investigation.

The father also is dead. My informant and one sister survive. They think the Mbatì "medicine" was satisfactory, notwithstanding that the sister believes that their father was secretly poisoned by his cousins, they being jealous of his affluence in wives and children.

The last step in the Mbatì rite is the transplanting of some plant. A suitable hole having been dug at one end, or even in the middle of the village street, each person takes a bulb of lily kind, probably a crinum or an amaryllis, such as are common on the rocky edges of streams, and pressing it against their backs and other parts of their body, and with a rhythmic swaying of their bodies, they plant it in that hole. Thereafter these plants are not destroyed. They are guarded from the village goats by a small enclosure. And should at any time the village remove, the plants are also removed, and replanted on the new site. Such plants are seen in almost every village.

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## GEOGRAPHICAL RECORD.

### AMERICA.

ARTESIAN WATER FROM MORAINES.—Recent exploration for artesian water to supply the City of Ithaca, the seat of Cornell University, has resulted in not a little contribution to our knowledge of the deposits underlying that city and of the mode of occurrence of ground waters in the Pleistocene deposits. The city lies on a flat, at the head of Cayuga Lake, and just southwest of the town thirteen wells have been bored. Several of these supply 300,000 gallons a day, the water flowing to the surface without pumping. The rock bottom of the valley, at least here, is 430 feet below the surface, the overlying strata being two zones of lake clay separated by a gravel stratum 20–70 feet thick at a depth of about 80 feet,